

OCIO Empower Rural Iowa Broadband Grant,

Greetings! Our name is Dan and Megan Hansen, we reside outside of Avoca, Iowa. To give you a little background about us, we both grew up in Southwest Iowa, attended Iowa State University and live in the Des Moines metro area before making the move back 'home' five years ago. We made the decision to leave behind the corporate 9-5 & income to start our own business and raise our family in small town Iowa. We own and operate Ag Decision Services, a precision agricultural company that works with local farmers to write variable rate prescriptions. We also have three young kids ages 6, 4 and 1.

When we bought our farm and built our home in 2018, we did reach out to Marne Elk Horn Telephone Company about providing internet as we are share holders in the company and enjoy working with them. However, due to constraints of the system, they were not able to provide services to our home.

We have secured other internet which does serve our household fairly well. However, it is satellite based which does have occasional issues during weather events and looking to the future as trees grow around our home, there is the possibility they may interfere with the signal.

With our business, we need reliable and high-speed internet as a majority of our work is completed on a web-based platform. An issue we never anticipated happening when we built our home was adding virtual learning to the needs of our internet. Truth be told, while we have secured probably the best satellite internet in our area; it can be overwhelmed when we are trying to run a business as well as join one to two classrooms during the global pandemic.

We are thrilled to hear that Marne Elk Horn is potentially exploring ways to bring fiberoptic services to our neighborhood and hopefully our home. While there are limits to any internet service, we view fiberoptic capabilities as our best and most reliable option as a long term solution to our internet. Combine with the great service Marne Elk Horn provides, we are confident in telling you that if given the opportunity, we would likely be life long customers.

We encourage you to make the investment in the Avoca and Walnut community. We are a vibrant farming community with many individuals relying on work-from-home capabilities at this time. A reliable, fast internet source would only continue to improve our community, serviced by the great team at Marne Elk Horn, we can assure you the grant dollars will be well spent and appreciated.

Respectfully submitted,

Dan and Megan Hansen

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